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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 MMO-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00
HA-05 DOTE-00 /104 W
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R 020805Z MAR 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0248
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

UNCLAS ANTANANARIVO 0352

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAIR, PINT, MA, KN, EAID
SUBJECT: CERP-0002: NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITIES IN MADAGASCAR:
VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT, GIFT OF 100 TRACTORS, POSSI-
BLE AIR AGREEMENT

REFS: A) 77 ANTANANARIVO A-034 B) ANTANANARIVO 0099
C) ANTANANARIVO 0239.

1. SUMMARY. ON FEBRUARY 25, NORTH-KOREAN VICE PRESIDENT
PAK SEUNG TCHEUL ARRIVED ANTANARIVO WITH A LARGE DELEGATION

FOR ONE WEEK VISIT. VISIT WAS OCCASION FOR GIFT TO MADAGASCAR
FROM PRESIDENT KIM IL SUNG OF 100 AGRICULTURAL TRACTORS.
PRESS REPORTS THAT NEGOCIATIONS HAVE BEGUN FOR AN
AIR ACCORD BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

2. PAK SEUNG TCHEUL, IDENTIFIED AS NORTH KOREAN VICE PRESIDENT
(PRESUMABLY HE IS PAK SONG CH'OL LISTED AS PREMIER IN CR CS
76-006) ARRIVED EARLY AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 25 AT HEAD OF A
LARGE DELEGATION INCLUDING RO TAI SEUK, IDENTIFIED AS VICE
PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (WITH RANK OF DEPUTY
PRIME MINISTER), RI HWA SEUN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE
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PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
AND VICE MINISTER HEU YEUNG YONG. SENIOR MEMBERS OF
DELEGATION ARE STAYING IN GOVERNMENT QUARTERS WHILE
APPROXIMATELY 30 OTHER MEMBERS ARE GOVERNMENT'S GUESTS
AT MADAGASCAR HILTON. DELEGATION IS SCHEDULED TO DEPART
MARCH 4TH.

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3. SO FAR, MOST IMPORTANT OCCASION HAS BEEN CEREMONIAL PRESENTATION OF 100 AGRICULTURE TRACTORS, ALONG WITH 100 OTHER AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS, A GIFT FROM PRESIDENT KIM IL SUNG TO THE MALAGASY PEOPLE. THIS GIFT REPORTEDLY ALSO INCLUDES CONSTRUCTION OF A PLANT FOR TRACTOR ASSEMBLY AND MANUFACTURE OF SPARE PARTS. THE TRACTORS REPORTEDLY ARE OF AVERAGE SIZE AND WEIGH MORE THAN 2,000 KGS.

COMMENT. THESE 100 TRACTORS APPEAR TO BE THE FIRST STRICTLY ECONOMIC NORTH-KOREAN ASSISTANCE TO MADAGASCAR AS OPPOSED TO EARLIER PRIMARILY CULTURAL, TECHNICAL & MILITARY ASSISTANCE. (SEE REFS.)

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS, NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN FEBRUARY 27 TOWARDS AN AIR AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. WHILE WE DON'T KNOW WHETHER THIS WILL LEAD TO ACTUAL DIRECT SERVICE BETWEEN PYONG YANG AND ANTANANARIVO, IT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT THAT NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION REPORTEDLY ARRIVED ON A NORTH KOREAN TU-154. BARRETT

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